

Spring 1-15-2006

ENG 3009-002

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English 3009G
Spring 2006
MWF 9:00-9:50, CH3160

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HUMAN/ NATURE

Ecology derives from the Greek words for house (*ecos*) and reason (*logos*). Since we must finally build our house in a larger world, ecology has come to refer to the study of our relationship to nature. In the broadest sense, it has implications for every aspect of cultural life.

This course explores several cultural views of the natural world, with the goal of better understanding our own situation. Readings will include *Gilgamesh*, Lao Zi, Tang dynasty poetry, Darwin, Thoreau, Helen and Scott Nearing, and Gary Snyder.

REQUIRED TEXTS

D.C. Lau, *Tao Te Ching*
Nearing, *The Good Life*.
Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature*
Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*
Sandars, *Epic of Gilgamesh*
Snyder, *No Nature*
Thoreau, *The Portable Thoreau*
Gao Xingjian, *Soul Mountain*
Packet of photocopies; selected online readings

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Attendance and Participation (20 percent of grade)

Attendance implies being prepared for class. I expect you to have done the assigned reading and will give unannounced quizzes. (You may miss two classes without penalty; thereafter I will lower your grade by at least a letter.) I will expect you to participate in our discussions. There will be several short, written papers (1-2 pages), and assignments requiring you to memorize passages from our reading.

Midterm examination (30 percent of grade)

The examination will include both short items and an essay. Class members will provide short answer items, and we will discuss possible essay topics in advance of the exam.

Final examination (30 percent of grade)

Your final will follow the same format as the midterm, but there will be multiple essays. Short answer items will be drawn from the second half of the semester's readings. Essay topics will also address those readings as well as larger questions raised by the course.

Semester Project (20 percent of grade)

Your final project may take any of a number of forms, academic or creative. You may choose to write an essay on one of our texts that particularly interests you or you may choose to research an aspect of our subject in greater detail (deep ecology, eco-poetics, qi gong, voluntary simplicity, etc.) I am also open to creative projects. In any case, your project must relate directly to our subject, and I must approve it in advance.

SCHEDULE

January 9, 11, 13 Introduction, The western inheritance: *Gilgamesh*

Jan. 18, 20 Wars Against Nature, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *Terminator*, *The Matrix*

Jan. 23-25-27 Confucius, *The Analects* (in packet), *The Classic of Poetry* (Owen, *Beginnings* 10-14, "Airs" 31-32, *Correspondences* 34-44), *The Classic of Change* (in packet)

Jan. 30, February 1, 3 Lao Zi, *Dao De Jing*

Feb. 6, 8, 10 Zhuang Zi (Owen, "Renouncing Kingship" 18, "Outer Things" 60, "The Way of Heaven" 64, "Heaven's motions" 108, "Discourse on Thinking of Things as Being on the same Level" 113, "Attaining Life" 133, "from the Zhuang-zi" 295). *The Classic of Mountains and Seas (Shanhaijing)* in packet.

Feb. 13, 15 Shamanism and Heavenly Journeys: The *Li Sao* (Owen 162), *The Chu-ci Tradition* (176-185), *Calling Back the Soul* (204)

Feb. 20, 22, 24 Theravada Buddhism, Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path

Feb. 27, March 1*, 3 Mahayana Buddhism

March 6. Midterm Examination

March 8, 10. Tang Poetry: Wang Wei (Owen 385-395)

March 13, 15, 17 SPRING RECESS

March 20, 22, 24 Thoreau, *Walden*

March 27, 29, 31 Darwin, *The Voyage of the Beagle* (<http://www.bartleby.com/29/>)

April 3, 5, 7 Nearing, *The Good Life*

April 10, 12, 14 Snyder, *No Nature* (*Hay for the Horses* 11, *Cold Mountain Poems* 22-29, *I Went Into the Maverick Bar* 211, *The Bath* 213, *What Happened Here Before* 251, *For/From Lew* 264, *Axe Handles* 266, *Working on the '58 Willys Pickup* 280, *Makings* 322, *Building* 366, *For Lew Welch in a Snowfall* 380)

April 17, 19, 21 Gao Xingjian, *Soul Mountain*

April 24, 26, 29 Gao Xingjian, *Soul Mountain*